



First Presbyterian Church, Tupelo, Mississippi
Morning Worship Service

Palm Sunday

April 5, 2020

10:00 A.M.

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

OPENING WORDS

Garments and branches were spread on the road. The way was prepared, fulfilling the promise of scripture. The king indeed came “on a colt, the foal of an ass.” Amid shouts of “Hosanna” and blessings, the prophet of Nazareth entered Jerusalem, acclaimed as a king. As the streets were cleared and the cheering subsided, a drama unfolded that even today grips the hearts of the crowds. Let us join together in the Call to Worship.

CALL TO WORSHIP (Loosely inspired by Psalm 118)

Leader: Though we have known hardship and pain, though life has not always turned out as we had hoped, we will stand here and say:

People: God’s steadfast love endures forever!

Leader: Though life becomes more complex, the deepest questions remain unanswered, and the mystery of faith deepens, we will say:

People: God’s steadfast love endures forever!

Leader: And though the pain of the world often seems more than we can bear or address, we will stand firm in our faith and say:

People: God’s steadfast love endures forever!

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Let us confess before God our tendency, like the Jerusalem crowds, to profess our faith in moments of enthusiasm and deny our faith in moments of stress.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Forgive us, O God, that as Jesus journeys toward the cross, our preference runs toward parades and palms and noisy celebrations. Forgive us that we are more willing to be instructed than redeemed. Forgive the obliviousness that shouts accolades of joy while your Son weeps for peace. Have mercy upon our brief faith that fades when faced with a world of troubles, with enthusiasm that easily fizzles, with hope we parade but do not pursue. Tear us away from the many purposes that drain our blood and sweat, so that our blurred eyes may catch the splendor of that noble vision which fed the soul of Christ. *(Pause for reflection and meditation)* Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Leader: Laying aside judgment, God offers us redemption; setting aside anger, God embraces us with love; letting go of grief, God pours living water upon us. This is the good news, my friends: God's steadfast love endures forever.

People: Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is the One who brings us the kingdom of God! Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

The Palms – *Les Rameaux*
John Michael Walker

Jean-Baptiste Fauré

Blossoms and palms in varied beauty vie,
Decked is the road with fragrant flowers to greet Him.
Jesus hath come a world’s sad tears to dry,
Even now the throngs rush forth with joy to meet Him.

*Sing and rejoice with one accord;
Sing joyous songs for His sublime ovation!
Hosanna! And praised be the Lord!
Blessed is He who hath brought us salvation!*

Gently he speaks, the people hear His voice,
Freedom returns though from the earth long banished.
All in a brotherhood again rejoice,
Light has returned and dreary darkness vanished.

THE READING OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

Matthew 22:1-11; Psalm 31:9-16

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Palm Sunday Meditation

Rev. Dr. Olin McBride

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

THE LORD'S PRAYER

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

BLESSING AFTER MEAL

A SHORT LITANY AS HOLY WEEK BEGINS

Today we have cheered you on as our champion and hailed you as our hero.

Forgive us tomorrow when our enthusiasm wanes.

Today we have entrusted you to rescue us from our pitiful circumstances.

Forgive us on Tuesday when we decide we can take care of ourselves.

Today we have made you the centerpiece of our very existence.

Forgive us on Wednesday when we forget to remember who you are.

Today we have called out to you loudly by name.

Forgive us on Thursday when we pretend that we've never met you.

Today we have stared at you with the starstruck eyes of fans and groupies.

Forgive us on Friday when we avert our eyes because it's too painful to see you on the cross.

Today we have expressed our unsuppressed hopefulness in the future you have in store for us.

Forgive us on Saturday when we believe all is lost.

Today we have been boldly certain of the earthly ways you will redeem us.

Restore us on Sunday when we are startled and awed by your rising.

- **The Palms** are placed in the sanctuary today, by the family of Susan Newton McDonald, to the glory of God and in remembrance of the triumphal entry of Jesus into the city of Jerusalem.
- **Today we celebrate the birth of *Lucy Cooper Burks***, born March 25 to Taylor and Mary Morgan Burks. Greg and Leslie Burks are the proud grandparents.
- **Thank you for your faithfulness in keeping your tithes and offerings up to date.** These are, indeed, difficult times. The church is being the church, the called out ones.

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES THIS WEEK

Thursday, April 9—7:00 p.m.—Maundy Thursday Communion via YouTube

Friday, April 10—7:00 p.m.—Good Friday Service via YouTube

FUN FIGURES

Live Stream Worship Service via YouTube Views as of April 2:

March 13: 440 March 22: 540 March 29: 445

PRAYERS FOR THIS WEEK

Cancer Treatments: Judy Armentrout, Aimee McDonald Burrow, Jackie Haguewood, Julie Seiler

Homebound: Chris Thompson, Ruth Ann Wilcox, Denise Williford

College Students: Caroline Burleson, Ansley Caldwell, Jackson Caldwell